

Westtown Township Historical Commission Meeting Minutes
1039 Wilmington Pike, West Chester, PA
Thursday, September 18, 2014.

In attendance: Commission members Dave Walter, Gail Guterl, Dan Campbell, Pat McDonough, and Erica Reilly. Jonathan Hoppe arrived late. Dan left early at 6:40 P.M.

I. Call to Order

Dave Walter called the meeting to order at 6:09 P.M. The commission welcomed its newest member, Erica Reilly, after her approval by the Board of Supervisors at their October 15, 2014 meeting.

II. Approval of Minutes (August 21, 2014)

Erica made a motion to approve the minutes, seconded by Gail. The minutes and notes were approved.

III. Public Comment (Non-Agenda Items)

None.

IV. Old Business

A. Bozzuto Development Update

The Bozzuto Group responded to calls to save the historic building at the corner of Rtes. PA 926 and US 202 (1142 Wilmington Pike) and has agreed to a set of self-imposed conditions that would save the property. Dan Campbell sent Dave Walter a draft of the Historic Commission's response to be made to the Board of Supervisors about Bozzuto's conditions. Dave noted for the record that the Historic Commission is unanimously in favor of saving the building. Dan responded to the Bozzuto conditions, noting that 1/3 of the building is a later addition, and that the HC supports the restoration of the building fabric by a qualified general contractor. Dave noted the HC recommendations need to go on the record during the next Planning Commission meeting. Pat will submit these recommendations not as a member of the HC, but as a qualified expert in historical architectural preservation. He noted that John Snook has suggested a combined meeting of the BOS, PC, and HC to sort out legal guidelines about each group's role moving forward.

B. Historic Resources Listing Update

Dave Walter asked if there were any additions to the list of Township structures built before 1901. Dan Campbell reported there is a springhouse at 924 Oakbourne Road that should be added to the resources list. Gail Guterl likewise suggested another listing for a springhouse at 1023 S. New Street. Dave noted that the house at 1512 Manley Road was built on the foundation

of an earlier barn. Dave also noted that Mary Brooks, archivist at the Westtown School, proved him with information about each of the buildings at that place, and that this information will also be added. Other additions noted by Dave are the original house and barn on 1010 Little Shiloh Road, a root cellar at 1532-34 Woodland Road, additional information about the Civil War Paroled P.O.W. Camp Elder at Oakbourne and S. Concord Roads, and structures at 1423 and 1431 Johnny's way. He has also made additions to the photo documentation files on properties on the list.

C. Westtown School Tour Registration Update

Dave Walter informed the commission that about ten people had registered for the architecture and history tour of its property on Saturday, October 18th.

D. Little Shiloh Cemetery Update

Commission members Dave Walter and Jonathan Hoppe will be meeting on September 29th, 2014 with State Representatives Stephen Barrar, Dan Truitt, the solicitors for Chester County and Westtown Township, township supervisor Rob Pingar, representatives from Veterans' Organizations, and others to better clarify which laws may apply to permitting access to the historic cemetery at the site of Shiloh A.M.E. Church. Developments from this meeting will be reported at next month's HC meeting. The commission discussed other actions that may be taken if and when access is granted. Dave suggested working with organizations such as the Veterans Administration, the Bethel A.M.E. Church in West Chester, former West Chester mayor and funeral director Charles DeBaptiste. Dave also noted that should access be granted, a firm has offered its services pro bono to help locate graves using ground penetrating radar.

E. Rossiter Creamery

Jonathan Hoppe raised the issue of the proposed demolition of the Rossiter creamery on E. Pleasant Grove Road. He noted it was one of the few Oakbourne Epileptic Home and Colony Farm structures remaining, and that further research was needed. Dave Walter suggested that the impending demolition is a reminder that the HC must continue to discuss its role in the preservation of historic resources.

V. New Business

A. Preservation Awards

Pat McDonough suggested that Westtown Township create a preservation award like those offered by the West Chester Historical Commission. Dave Walter noted that before any such action could be taken, the township ordinance for the HC must be changed but supported the idea. Pat suggested that awards could be done by submission or nomination. Gail Guterl noted that criteria must be drawn up for what would constitute such an award, but that the HC could also choose who is recognized. Dave noted that residents

would also have to be informed of such an award. Erica Reilly suggested that could be accomplished through a notice in the *Gazette*. Pat suggested that the award could be a framed certificate of recognition, or a plaque mounted on a structure.

B. Holiday Decorations

Dave Walter suggested that an effort could be organized to decorate historic township homes for the holidays. It was noted that this could be more feasible than organizing a holiday tour.

VI. Public Comment All Topics

None.

The meeting was adjourned at 7:10 P.M.